

Applicants : Arjang Agahi and Orang Agahi
For : COVER FOR THE DIAPHRAGM OF A
STETHOSCOPE AND DISPENSER FOR
SUCH A COVER
International Filing Date : 24 September 2004
International Application No. : PCT/EP2004/010838
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The listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 3, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13-18, 20, 23 and 24.

Please add new claim 27 as follows:

1. (Original) An apparatus for dispensing a cover device, the cover device comprising a frame and a membrane, the cover device being actuatable from a first state, in which an outer portion of the membrane is seated on an outer surface of the frame such that the frame holds the membrane in a generally deployed state, and a second state in which the outer portion of the membrane is located generally inwardly of its seated position, the apparatus comprising: a magazine for storing at least one cover device in said first state, the magazine having a mouth through which the at least one cover device may be dispensed; and means for actuating the at least one stored cover device from the first state to the second state.
2. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said actuating means actuates the at least one stored cover device from the first state to the second state upon movement of said at least one stored cover device into the magazine.
3. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 1-~~or~~2, further including an actuating mechanism arranged to urge the at least one cover device towards the mouth.
4. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 3, wherein said actuating mechanism comprises a platform mounted on a spring, the spring being biased to urge the platform towards the mouth.

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5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ Claim 1, wherein a retaining lip is provided around at least part of the mouth, the retaining lip extending inwardly of the mouth.

6. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 5, wherein the retaining lip is dimensioned to engage with, during use, the outer portion of the cover device nearest the mouth when in said first state, thereby retaining said cover device in the apparatus, and to allow said cover device to be removed from the apparatus when in the second state.

7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ Claim 1, wherein said actuating means comprises means for dislodging the outer portion of the membrane from its seat on the frame.

8. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, wherein said dislodging means is actuatable between a dislodging state and a deflected state.

9. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 8, wherein said dislodging means is actuatable from said dislodging state to said deflected state by passage of a cover device moving towards said mouth.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in Claim ~~8 or 9~~, wherein said dislodging means is biased to adopt the dislodging state.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of Claims 7 to 10~~, wherein said dislodging means comprises at least one projection extending away from an interior surface of the magazine and being spaced-apart from the mouth.

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12. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 11, wherein the spacing between the at least one projection and the mouth is such as to accommodate, during use, a single cover device between the at least one projection and the mouth.

13. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 11-~~or 12~~, wherein said at least one projection extends obliquely from the interior surface of the magazine in a direction generally towards the mouth.

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of~~ Claims 11-~~to 13~~, wherein at least a part of said projections are formed from a flexible, resilient material.

15. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of e~~Claims 11-~~to 14~~, wherein said at least one projection is carried by a ring, the ring being seated on a shoulder formed at the interior surface of the magazine.

16. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of e~~Claims 7-~~to 15~~, wherein said dislodging means is spaced-apart from the mouth, the spacing being such as to accommodate, during use, a single cover device between the dislodging means and the mouth.

17. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any preceding e~~Claim 1, the apparatus containing at least one of said cover devices.

18. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any preceding e~~Claim 1, further comprising a collar, the magazine being movable with respect to the collar in a first direction, and wherein the collar carries said actuating means, said actuating means actuating the at least one stored cover device from the first state to the second state upon movement of said magazine in said first direction.

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19. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 18, wherein resilient biasing means are provided between said collar and said magazine, the resilient biasing means being arranged to urge said magazine in a second direction, said second direction being generally opposite to said first direction.

20. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 18 ~~or 19~~, wherein said collar is located at least partially around the external periphery of the magazine.

21. (Original) A cover device comprising a frame and a membrane, the cover device being actuatable from a first state, in which an outer portion of the membrane is seated on an outer surface of the frame such that the frame holds the membrane in a generally deployed state, and a second state in which the outer portion of the membrane is located generally inwardly of its seated position.

22. (Original) A cover device as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the outer portion of the membrane comprises a peripheral ring.

23. (Currently Amended) A cover device as claimed in Claim 21 ~~or 22~~, wherein the outer surface of the frame is concave in transverse cross-sectional profile to define a seat for the outer portion of the membrane.

24. (Currently Amended) A cover device as claimed in ~~any one of Claims 21 to 23~~, wherein at least the outer portion of the membrane is formed from elastic material.

25. (Original) A cover device as claimed in Claim 24, wherein, in the first state, said outer portion is stretched by the frame such that the membrane is self-retaining on the frame.

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26. (Original) A cover device as claimed in Claim 25, wherein, in the second state, said outer portion is contracted with respect to the first state and is located generally inwardly of the frame.

27. (New) A cover device as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the outer surface of the frame is shaped to define a seat for the outer portion of the membrane.